



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Aging Committee

February 10, 2015

**Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA
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**Senate Bill 290 An Act Concerning Patient –Designated Caregivers
House Bill 5455 An Act Concerning Family Caregivers**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports and provides the following information in regards to Senate Bill 290 and House Bill 5455.

SB 290 mandates each hospital to provide a patient the opportunity to designate a person as a caregiver upon discharge and allows for communication with the identified caregiver when discharge is taking place, along with instructions on how to care for the patient when the patient returns to his or her home. House Bill 5455 revises section 19a of the general statutes to adopt the Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable (CARE) Act which requires hospitals to record the names of family caregivers, notify the caregivers of discharge plans and provides the caregivers with instructions for follow-up care.

Family support is an integral component in a patient's recovery. Requiring hospitals to record names of family caregivers with subsequent notification and instructions for follow up care is patient centered and reinforces the importance of family as caregivers in the plan of care/discharge plan. Acknowledging family caregivers as a critical tool and providing them instruction in after care will only lead to better outcomes.

Even in situations where home health agency services are contracted to assist with after care, those services in many cases are time limited, in not only the hours per week, but in duration. The family or a designated caregiver is often heavily relied upon to participate in the plan of care.

As healthcare systems move toward community based care, family support becomes even more important to achieving good patient outcomes.

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